

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**Social Services Portfolio**  
**2014-15 Budget Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number: 1**

**Question No: 431**

**Topic: Apply the One-Week Ordinary Waiting Period (OWP) to all working age payments**

**Hansard Page: Written**

**Senator Brown** asked:

Can you please explain the current rule which allows the OWP to be served concurrently with other applicable waiting periods?

- a. Does the Department have figures as to how many people served the OWP concurrently with other applicable waiting periods?
- b. Has the Department estimated how many people will now have to serve concurrent OWPs as a result of the removal of this measure?

**Answer:**

Under current legislation, the Ordinary Waiting Period (OWP) may be served concurrently with another waiting period in some cases but separately in others. Generally the OWP starts on the date the person claims payment whereas other waiting periods, such as the Income Maintenance Period, Seasonal Work Preclusion Period, Newly Arrived Residents' Waiting Period or the Lump Sum Preclusion Period, may start on the day either prior to or after the person claims payment. If the OWP and another waiting period overlap, the periods may be served concurrently. If the person serves their other waiting period entirely before claiming payment and serving the OWP, or they claim payment and serve their OWP entirely before the other waiting period(s) starts, the periods may be served separately.

In 2012-13, 25 076 people served their OWP concurrently with another waiting period.

It is estimated that, as a result of this measure, approximately 14 950 people will serve the OWP consecutively with another waiting period where they would previously have served them concurrently.